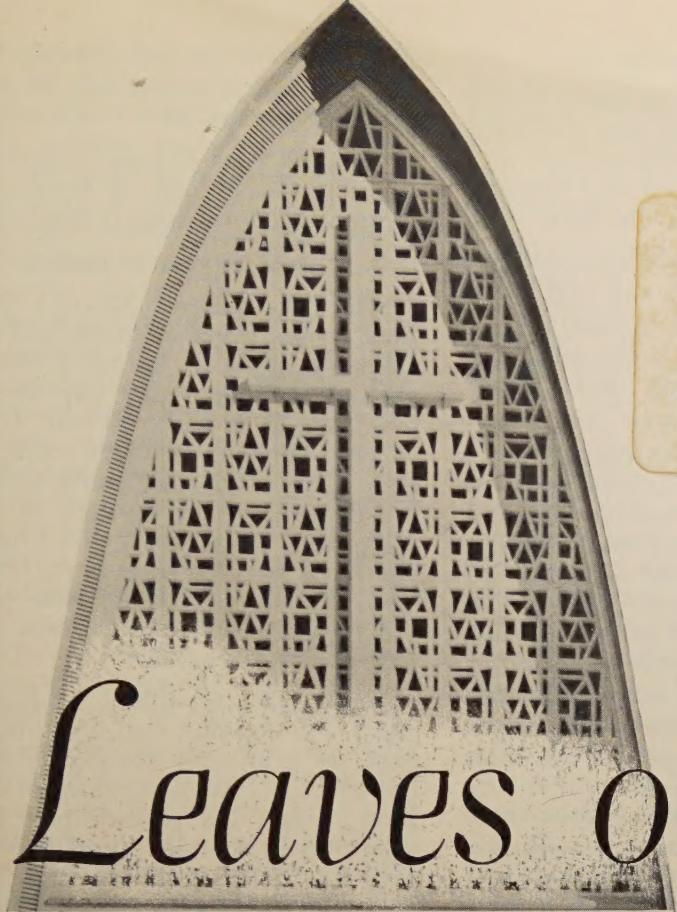
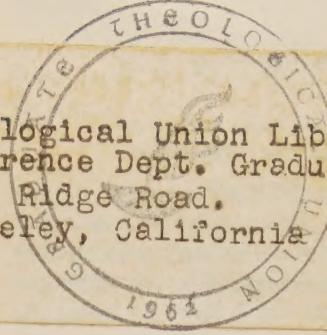


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The Greatest Thing

A Sermon by John Alexander Dowie
November 8, 1896

Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart be acceptable in Thy sight, profitable unto this people, and to all to whom these words shall come, oh Lord, my Strength and my Redeemer. Amen.

Now I want to say to you, beloved, a very few words and these I can not forbear to say: "And now abideth Faith, Hope, Love, these three; but the greatest of these is" — what? Audience: — "Love." Dr. Dowie: — Love . . .

And the Greatest of These, Love

I think there has been an exhibition of Love of a very practical character, of Love deep and true, that has inspired these gifts, some of the smallest of which have cost the most, and some of the largest of which have been expressions of great Love, but the Love I speak of tonight is so great that no words

that I can ever form can utter it.

I have never cared so much to speak about it as to possess it, and to live it and by my life to Love and to let God and good angels know just what that Love had cost me; but let me speak of it tonight as the greatest of God's Great Names, the most glorious of all His attributes. "God is Love."

To know that He was life and light, and yet not to know that God is Love would be for us to live amidst the blaze of power and beauty, unloved and utterly lonely. To me the greatest thing of all is the Love of God. The greatest power of all is the Love of God.

Oh, Love thou bottomless abyss, My sins are swallowed up in thee, Nor spot of guilt remains on me, For Jesus' blood through earth and skies

Mercy, free, boundless mercy cries.

That Love has spread mercy above the heavens; that Love has made mercy everlasting; it endureth for ever. That Love never fails, and that Love finds its highest expression in loving those, and sacrificing for those, who are full of hate, and sin and horrid depravity.

I Love Him Tonight
Because He First Loved Me

God's consuming fire is Love pure and simple and perfect. I find its highest expression not in any words, nor in any deeds that even God Himself has wrought, but in the fact that every attribute of His nature, as well as Himself, is an expression of Love.

The Ocean which is all around this world has many names. One place you call it the Atlantic, another Pacific, another Mediterranean Sea, or the Red Sea, the Indian Ocean, or the Yellow Sea; but look at your maps and you will find that it is only one great sea called different names, and so God's nature is Love, call it by what name you will.

There's a wideness in God's mercy, Like the wideness of the sea;

There's a kindness in His justice,
Which is more than liberty.

For the love of God is broader
Than the measure of man's mind;
And the heart of the Eternal
Is most wonderfully kind.

God's Love Is Beyond All Our Imagination

I have sometimes thought of how little I can accomplish in my short life. I do not make any mistakes as to the possibilities of my human endeavors, nor do I dare to limit the possibilities of God's power in a perfectly consecrated man, and when I get to that place and have the environments about me, which make it possible for me, with an entire abandonment, to give expression in activities to Love in its highest purity, then there are no possibilities found in God that may not take place. No man, no age has ever seen that which is possible to a human being, entirely purified by God's Spirit, filled with Divine Love, and entirely consecrated to His service in the redemption of humanity. We have yet to see it. But this I know, that if you want to know this Love of God, you can not know it until you have for His sake gone out of light into darkness, gone out of strength into weakness, gone out of your healthy and happy surroundings into disease, gone down until you have touched humanity at the deepest and lowest place. I tell you that, because

I Find in Christ the Expression of Love

That Love, which for our sakes made Him who is powerful and rich beyond human comprehension, become weak and poor and to mingle with a degraded humanity; to be baptized amidst a crowd of filthy sinners in the Jordan; and to work amongst people possessed by and oppressed by the devil; and go down until His enemies cast it in His teeth that he was the lover and the friend of the harlot, and the publican and the sinner, and the vilest and the lowest. He became of no reputation because He sought association with the lowest of humanity . . .

He who lived in the highest heaven could go down to hell, because Love took Him there; not merely to earth, but I remind you of the words,

"He Descended Into Hell"

He preached to the spirits in prison, the disobedient and the filthy in the days of Noah, especially men of whom it is written that when He looked upon them He said:

"That the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented Jehovah that He had made man on the earth".

Yet to these who had been getting, perhaps, more wicked as the centuries and the thousands of years rolled on, He went down, not merely to earth, not merely into the grave, but He descended into Hades, the world of unclean spirits, and Love took Him there.

I have thought sometimes, My Lord, when this brief life is over and my Love has poured out such treasures as my life can pour at Thy feet, and the talents Thou hast given me have all been used in this world and their accumulations laid at Thy feet, and when Thou shalt say to me, "It is enough," or, should I be worthy, "Well done, thou good and faithful servant, enter thou into the joy of thy Lord," that I shall say to Thee, "Lord, how can I enter into Thy joy if after this life my Love shall not find expression in service there for those that never loved Thee here?"

Friends, when a man grows older in the world and in large outlooks upon humanity, I tell you one thing he thinks of: he thinks of the time when he shall stand before the great White Throne and give an account; when he shall stand there, his labors closed, his sins forgiven, his heart cleansed, and waiting humbly at the Lord's feet, as he listens for the words of welcome.

I shall not miss it, for I love Him; I shall not miss it, for I would die for Him; I shall not miss it, for I have no thought in life, nor in the future, that is not bound up with His service.

But I have thought of how could I best express my Love for Him. On that great Judgment Day, when He says, "Come ye blessed of My Father," I will also hear Him say that it is because He was hungry and they fed Him, naked and they clothed Him, sick and in prison and they visited Him, and the righteous

shall disclaim and say, "when saw we ye hungry, naked and in prison," and the answer will come:

"Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these, My brethren, ye have done it unto me."

"One of the Least of These,"

And oh, friends, when I hear that, I shall think of those, as I am thinking now, to whom I would gladly have taken that cup of the living water, but I could not. They lived in lands I could not reach, or they passed away from earth before I was born, in the myriads of the ages, they never knew the Christ, and never rejected Him; never knew God, and never rejected Him, and yet they cannot enter heaven for they are not prepared.

I will tell you what I am thinking. I am thinking that this life of ours, so brief and apparently too imperfect to find expression for our Love, is but the prelude to a life where we shall find ourselves in a glorified spirit with the glorified body, and with the disenthralled nature set free, emancipated, transfigured and made Christ-like and God-like; and that when we shall say, "Lord wilt thou not send me, because I Love Thee? Wilt Thou not send me to hell? — to hell!" What do you mean? I almost hear you say. I mean this: that when you understand Divine Love, you will want to go to hell. You will want even in the life to come, to go to those in Hades, the unseen world of spirits that are doomed, you will long in your glorified nature to go to them and tell them how even there that mercy that endureth forever can reach them. His right hand can reach the doomed even after they have "made their bed in hell," for so His Word declares.

Friends, I love beauty, I love everything lovely. To me the morning sun as it rises up from that lake is often a study. I have risen early just to look at the sunrise, as there appear out of the dark waters and the night

These hues of the rich unfolding morn,
That ere the glorious sun is born,
By some soft touch invisible
Are made around its paths to swell.

As the darkness trembles before the approaching light, and one after

another the beams of the coming sun all golden, and purple, and bright, shoot into the sky angels of light coming before the glorious sun, my heart thrills with delight. I love stars, I could stand all night and care nothing for sleep unless compelled, breaking up with a powerful telescope the beautiful Milky Way into its glorious galaxy of dazzling stars of every hue, each exceeding the other in beauty, leading from that Cross away up to the Pleiades where perhaps the Throne of God may be found in that smallest of the stars which is said to be the Center of the Universe. I love beauty and I love to think of all the beautiful things, the flowers, and the grass, the glorious woods, the glory and the beauty of human art as it finds expression in music, in painting, and in a thousand things.

I love the thought of heaven with its pearly gates, its jasper walls, and those glorious jewels, fifteen hundred miles square, placed twelve of them; one upon the other; and the mansions reaching fifteen hundred miles into the air, according to the measure of a man; but, much as I love these things, I have learned from my Lord that

Love Finds Its Highest Expression in Taking Out of the Deep Depths of Defilement That One Wandering Sheep That Went Away From God

and out of the depths of hell, setting that jewel in the Crown of the Redeemer.

I think I have learned something of it, when I say this to you; that while I want to be surrounded as much as I can be, consistently with the right use of divinely given resources, with all that is beautiful, and to teach the young by leading them from the lesser to the greater, I hope that in all the days to come, you will, with me, believe that Love finds its highest expression in reaching the lowest; in dying, if it were possible, ten thousand deaths, and being

Willing to Share the Abodes of the Damned That You Might Be a Blessing for the Lost.

Did you ever have that willingness? Listen! Paul had it when he said: "I could wish that I were accursed from Christ, for my brethren, my kinsmen according to the flesh." Moses had it when he said: "Oh,

this people have sinned a great sin, and have made them gods of gold. Yet now if Thou wilt forgive their sin —; and if not, blot me, I pray Thee, out of Thy book which Thou hast written."

Have you got it? Friends, I know not whether I have got it. I sometimes believe I have. I know, however, that I am getting there. I want to get there fully. Only that it would not be a right use of my life, I would be willing to go now to Molokai among the lepers, and die with the lepers, never being permitted to leave their island; but I think I can do more by living for Chicago, by living for Illinois, by living for America, by living for Asia, Africa and Europe; by doing what I can to inspire in others this thought; that the highest and greatest commandment, the eleventh commandment is to

Love One Another As He Loved Us:

and therefore, be willing, at any time, to leave the highest place we ever can reach in heaven, and to go down and rescue those, that in this world and beyond, have made their bed in hell. Friends, Love never measures sacrifice, and knows no limits to toil — and I want that Love. I want that Love which is

only limited by Wisdom, by Faith, by Hope, all of which are illimitable, guarded by all the other graces, made strong by association with them, and is yet, in its perfect self-abnegation, the giving up of the last drop of vitality, for a dying humanity. Deep! Deep!

Deep as Hell

Love must be willing to go: for Christ descended there. Love is incapable of definition, but it is capable of expression in the little things, as well as in the great sacrifices. Let us be willing, with all the graces set forth in that description of Love, to be willing, to find expression for our Love, and in the annihilation, if it were needful, of our own existence, in the self-abnegation which makes us willing to lose our lives that others may be saved: for

"He that loseth his life for My sake shall find it... unto life eternal."

When you get there you will never measure your Love by dollars, but you will pour out its possibilities in time and money and everything else, and doing Love's bidding, will wait on Love to supply your every need. God help you.

The Home, The Church, The School

Excerpts from Sermon Delivered by General Overseer Wilbur Glenn Voliva, June 13, 1926

This afternoon I will talk to you on: *The Home, the Church, the School.*

I preface what I shall say on these three institutions by the fundamental teaching that every man is the creation of God the Almighty, that every man is a free moral agent and has the power of choice. God does not deal with man in an arbitrary manner. Some men attempt so to deal with their fellowmen, but it always results in failure. A man cannot be treated as though he were an animal.

God created man a perfect being. Perhaps you cannot conceive of man as a perfect being. As you behold him today, he is alienated

from God, in need of reconciliation. He is going his own way, and he refuses to submit to God. But in the beginning it was not so. God gave man a perfect start and placed him in a perfect environment.

A Future Perfect Environment Awaits Man

A great deal is said about environment. I recognize its importance. I am laboring today to give the boys and girls the best possible environment. A fish will live in water, but it will not live very long if you toss it on the beach. Water is its proper environment — not sand. The day is coming when man will have a perfect environment. That is

the plain teaching of the Word of God. During the Millennium, God is going to give man another opportunity to serve Him, under other and better circumstances.

In eternity, God, seeing the end from the beginning knew that man would do just what he did in the Garden of Eden, and just what he is doing today. He does it of his own free will. The man who steals does it because he chooses to steal. The way for a thief to overcome his stealing is to give himself to God.

Few are willing to give themselves unqualifiedly to the Lord; and that is the reason they make very little progress in the Christian life.

Foreseeing that man would fall, God provided the plan of redemption. God foresaw Paradise Lost, and He foresaw Paradise Regained. He foresaw that man, whom He would create, would listen to the voice of the Devil instead of to Him; that man would do the bidding of the Devil instead of His.

Do not be deceived by those who say that the Devil is a myth. The Devil is a personality. He exercises mighty power and dominion over the earth. There is a Devil! He is the cause of all the havoc that is being wrought in the world.

If you will read Isaiah 14 and Ezekiel 28, you will learn that among the angelic beings whom God created (angels are created beings, just as men and women are) was one who was more beautiful than all the rest. God made him the prince of the earth and its inhabitants. That being fell through pride.

Pride has caused the downfall of multiplied millions. I have known of men who have joined a church solely to procure business. It makes me think of this story: At a time when there was much persecution of Christians, a man was asked the question, "What is your religion?" Now, if he had said it was the religion which they were trying to suppress he would have been beheaded with the broad ax, although it was his religion. At last, on his being pressed for an answer, he replied, "It is that of the man who holds the broad ax!" He thought that he would save his head by being of the same religion as was the man who held the ax. It is true

of many people that they are whatever the crowd is!

That angel (who is now the Devil) fell through pride. God dispossessed him of the earth. And as soon as God created man he (the Devil) determined to repossess himself of the earth. He has never ceased his effort in that direction. It is his sole object.

In the days of Jesus Christ we find the Devil taking Him up on a mountain and saying to Him, "All these kingdoms that You see shall be Yours if You will fall down and worship me." The Lord Jesus thwarted him with the Sword of the Spirit. The Devil has continued his efforts to this day, and that is why the earth is filled with corruption and with graft; that is the reason hundreds of men and women every year are sentenced to the penitentiary. They have listened to the Devil, who has said, "Sell me your soul and I will give you a million dollars."

The Devil said to man in the beginning, "I know what God said to you; but it is not true! You listen to me!" Man listened to him and sinned — and man died!

I have been quoting from the book of Genesis — which, perhaps, some of you have not read for a long time, and some have not read at all. It may be you have heard teachers say it is a legend and a myth, and unreliable. You will find out that it is *The Inspired Word of God*.

Marriage Ordained and Sanctified of God

Now, who ordained marriage?

Where did marriage come from?

Is marriage a human institution, or is it something that you and I are bound by the Eternal Word of God to recognize and reverence as Divine?

A minister said the other day: "Reverence for marriage, for the home, for the Bible, for God, for the Church, seems to be disappearing."

There never was a time since God instituted marriage and created the home when they were regarded as lightly as at this present time.

To go back to Genesis: You will find that God Almighty ordained marriage, that He created the home,

that He established the family relationship — a beautiful institution! Let him deny it successfully who can!

The home is the very foundation of society — and I will say that if the right kind of homes do not exist there will be no Church. That is God's truth.

God is the author of monogamy. He has no use for anything else. He ordained that there should be one man for one woman, and one woman for one man. That is God's Word!

Many prominent writers say that unless there is an about-face in this matter of marriage, and unless the children are taught the Christian faith, this nation is doomed! I agree with them. Destroy the home, and you do not need to do anything more; you have destroyed the nation! Destroy the home, and you will destroy the Church!

A human being, first of all, is a spirit; next a soul; next, a body. The trouble is that a large proportion of the unions are of the earth, earthy; and not of the spirit, spiritual; hence, the large divorce rate.

Home!

It is a beautiful word, a very tender word! The word "home" will bring tears easier than any other word in the language except the word "mother." I think that those of us who are now middle-aged and who are hastening on our journey, do not care to dwell very long on thoughts of the old home.

The first thing that a man and a woman who are *married* (meaning a union which God has brought about) will do, will be to establish a family altar. How can there be a home when there is no family altar? How can a man and woman be united in the holy bonds of wedlock, by and through the Spirit of the Living God, and then live their married life without a place of prayer — so that should children come to bless their home they will have to say, as they grow older, that they have never heard father and mother pray?

I say that every child has the inalienable right, given by Almighty God, of being taught how to pray at his or her mother's knee. The fact of the matter is, fathers and

mothers, these children ought to be able to say when they become men and women, "I never knew the time when I did not love and serve God!"

Destruction of the Home One of the Chief Causes of the World's Troubles

I say again that one of the problems with the world today is that in thousands of instances the home is no more.

Give me the right kind of homes, and I will show you a Church that will be a tremendous power!

If the Bible teaches one thing more than another it is that we shall pray for the unsaved and the unconverted, and never give up.

Another thing: Fathers and mothers, according to the Word there must be rulership in the home. That rule must be the rule of love.

When I was twenty years of age, at home from college, I never left the house without telling my father where I was going. Why not? Is it not the way to do? Do you not suppose when the hour becomes late a father and mother become anxious to know where their son or daughter is — what are they doing, and are they in good company?

The right kind of son and the right kind of daughter love and respect their father and their mother and desire to obey them.

The *Wall Street Journal* said in an article: "What is needed today is the restoration of the old-fashioned home with the family altar; the restoration of the old-fashioned prayer meeting." The prayer meeting is a great help in living the Christian life.

Now what about the Church?

There are thousands who never enter a church on the Lord's Day.

Keep the Lord's Day holy!

As it is, if we are not careful this nation will go the way that Rome and Greece went.

Let us attend the services in God's House, and keep the Lord's Day! It should be second nature for a Christian to come to the House of God on the Lord's Day.

The Home, the Church — and now the School!

In the schools of this state the Bible is not allowed to be read — which is a terrible blunder! If a child is trained physically, while at the same time he or she knows nothing about God and about the Lord Jesus Christ, what is the difference between that child and a fine horse? Let us give the children and the young people the right kind of homes, let us give them the influence of the Church of the Lord Jesus Christ, let us give them the right kind of schools — and save them for God and for the Christian faith, and bring them up to be true men and women! They are virgin soil.

May God help us to be a true manifestation of Him in the Home, in the Church, in the School, in the City, in the factory, the workshop and the office!

Do you not know that Christian workers everywhere are distressed beyond words to express it? We hear the cry, "We must get back to God, put the Bibles in the schools, and teach the Christian faith!"

My prayer is that God will help us all to do right, so that our homes and our schools will be everything that they ought to be, and so that the Church will be a mighty power!

Fifty Years Nearer the Rapture

Excerpts From Sermon By General Overseer, Michael J. Mintern
Delivered July 15, 1951 At Commemoration Of The
Golden Anniversary Of Opening Of The City Of Zion.

When in 1896 John Alexander Dowie founded, under God, the Christian Catholic Church with five hundred charter members, his thought was a church organization in which every child of God who accepted the Bible as his rule of faith and practice, having repented of his sins and trusted in God for Salvation, could find a church home, irrespective of minor differences. That was his hope for this city: a people united, sufficiently at least to have one church, working together for the extension of the Kingdom of God, working to bring about what our Lord taught us to pray for — *Our Father Who Art in heaven, Hallowed be Thy Name. Thy Kingdom Come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven* (Matthew 6:9,10).

This city was to be a place where God's Name would be honored, where every inhabitant would be a child of God, where every home would be a foretaste of heaven, having as its center the family altar. What a marvelous conception! Yes, and we bow our heads as we realize how "old human nature" spoiled that beautiful picture. But our hearts are filled with deep thankfulness as we anticipate the day which is coming when *God's will shall be done on this earth*.

The man whom God used to found this city looked forward with

great anticipation to the coming again of Christ to earth to set up His Millennial Kingdom. He did not know whether he would be permitted to tarry until the *Rapture*; but he felt that sometime within the space of one hundred years the Lord would *Return in Glory*. I can say that I thank God for the years spent here working as best I knew to have a city for God. And it is my conviction that those of us who came to this city with that purpose in view will experience greater joy in the Millennium, when we see accomplished that for which we labored in our earthly life. Paul's statement in I Corinthians 15:58 is a comforting one: *Therefore, my beloved brethren, be ye steadfast, unmoveable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, forasmuch as ye know that your labor is not in vain in the Lord.*

The one whom God used in establishing this city was a man who hated sin and abhorred iniquity. Is it, therefore, any wonder that Satan hated and persecuted him? His great desire was to found a community from which the *Word of Truth* would go forth to the ends of the earth, a place where young men and women would be trained for work in the great "harvest field", a place where little children would be taught in the things of God.

There Has Been But One Perfect Man, The Man Christ Jesus

It is well to remember that all God's servants, like Elijah, were men "subject to like passions as we are." The only perfect man was "the man Christ Jesus." And when I say, "I believe God called John Alexander Dowie and used him," does that mean I would say he never made a mistake? No! But I am not his judge. Paul said, *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth* (Romans 14:4). I do know that God used him to bring the message of Salvation to the lost, to bring healing to the sick and afflicted, to sound out a mighty call to Repentance.

I also believe God called Wilbur Glenn Voliva. Would I say that he did not make mistakes? No! God uses human beings with all their weaknesses. He used David, though on one occasion David sinned grievously. But David repented; and in the main did a wonderful work for God. I will also say this: I would not be standing here today if I did not believe God had called me to this place and position. Does that mean I do not recognize at least some of my own shortcomings? (I will not say I recognize them all; no mortal lives who recognizes all his own shortcomings.)

Fifty years nearer the Rapture! Have there been changes in these fifty years since the City of Zion was opened? In my office is an album showing the countryside when the options on the land were taken. Sheridan Road looks like a country lane. Today it is a busy highway.

One thing that has had tremendous effect on our modern life is the internal-combustion engine, which is responsible for automobiles running to and fro like "lightning." Read Nahum 2:3,4: . . . the chariots shall be with flaming torches in the day of His preparation . . . The chariots shall race in the streets, they shall jostle one against another in the broad ways: they shall seem like torches, they shall run like lightnings.

This prophecy was to have its fulfilment "in the day of His preparation." Today this country is criss-crossed with highways; and the same is true the world over. Daniel prophesied, "Many shall run to and

from, and knowledge shall be increased." How true of this time!

Another outstanding indication of the momentous days in which we live is the return of the Jews to their homeland. God warned that disobedience on the part of Israel would result in their being scattered "from one end of the earth even unto the other" (Deut. 28:64). However, there was to be a regathering, and it is well to note the words of prophecy concerning that event — Jeremiah 16:14-18; Ezekiel 37: 11-14, 21.

The Lord Jesus said, *Jerusalem shall be trodden down of the Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles be fulfilled* (Luke 21:24); and the Apostle Paul made this statement, *Blindness in part is happened to Israel until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in* (Romans 11:25).

One day ere long the Church — "the Bride of Christ" — shall be caught up to meet her Lord. Will you be ready when God's clock strikes the hour? You will either be amongst *the ready* or amongst *the unready*. If not ready, you will stay on the earth and go through at least part of the Great Tribulation. I say, "at least" because you may suffer death during the judgments which will be poured out upon a Christ-rejecting world. If you are ready, you will be translated in a moment, *in the twinkling of an eye*, and you will sit down with the Lord at *the marriage supper of the Lamb*.

"The Budding Of The Fig Tree"

In the "Chicago Tribune" of July 11, there appeared this article from Tel Aviv:

Israeli authorities are considering a scheme to bring 70,000 Jews by air from Iran, it was reported today.

The scheme is expected to be speeded following the closing of the Iranian consulate-general in Jerusalem on Saturday. Observers said Iran was moving to gain the support of Arab nations in any United Nations move she may make in her oil dispute with Britain. Since 1948, planes have brought 50,000 Jews to Israel from the Yemen and 107,000 from Iraq.

Were planes flying through the air back in 1900 when this city was opened? No; but we are now in the days of *God's preparation*. When

will that preparation be finished? I do not know, but we are fifty years nearer to that glorious day of the Rapture. Events are transpiring with lightning rapidity. Our Savior spoke of the "fig tree" — a symbol of the Jewish nation (Luke 21:29-31).

Perhaps World War II was a part of "the time of Jacob's trouble" about which we read in Jeremiah 30. Could you imagine anything worse than that which befell the Jews in Germany when six million of them were taken to slaughterhouses and systematically put to death?

Israel, you will recall, did not leave Egypt until they had gone through bitter persecution. And the Israeli government would not be taking tens of thousands of Jews to the land of Israel if it were not for the persecution to which they have been and are being subjected.

And I will bring them again into their land that I gave unto their fathers (Jeremiah 16:15). If this were not the Inspired Word of God, how could any one have known that this people whom the nations sought to destroy, would live on and be brought back, even hundreds of thousands of them, by planes, to the land which God "gave to their fathers"? Note the following Scripture passage, and who will say that it does not contain veiled reference to the airplane? *As birds flying, so will the Lord of hosts defend Jerusalem; defending also He will deliver it; and passing over He will preserve it* (Isaiah 31:5). There are other passages we could quote: Isaiah 60:8; Deut. 28:49; Habakkuk 1:8; Rev. 12:14.

What did our Lord say? "This generation (this nation or family of Israel) shall not pass (from the earth) till all these things be fulfilled" (Matt. 24:34). Today the Jews are going back, and the majority of them are being flown on "wings." Fifty years ago the Turks were ruling Palestine; Israel was downtrodden and "scattered." Today they are in their own land; they have their own parliament, their own army. God has surely accomplished a marvelous work in this time!

How can any one be careless and unconcerned in these *the days of God's preparation*?

Though we see only "as through a glass darkly," we do know that oil is playing a vital role in both war and peace. We also know that Russia is opposed to the so-called capitalistic nations, and that any peace negotiations the Communists may enter into or any agreements they may make are nothing more than temporary provisions to enable them to go on toward the destruction of all else but Communism. It is interesting to watch developments.

The Arab nations would like to destroy Israel. Where will Russia throw her strength? We cannot answer many questions, but we do know that out of the distress and turmoil of nations will come the *return of the Lord in Glory*. In that day we who have loved and served Him — yes, every one who has accepted Jesus Christ as Savior — will be with Him!

Fathers and mothers, if you would keep your sons and daughters out of the greatest conflict this

world could ever dream of, bring them to the foot of the Cross! — be in travail for them until you know of a certainty *they are ready for the Coming of the Lord*.

Beloved, if you prefer the so-called "pleasures" of the world, the flesh and the Devil, to a life of godliness and holiness, you will awake to shame and contempt; but if you are His child, and your delight is in the things of God, you will awake to everlasting life.

Those who go out with the beautiful Gospel message, who make known the wonderful love of God and the soon appearing of our glorious Lord, those who "turn many to righteousness," will "shine as the brightness of the firmament, and as the stars for ever and ever."

*Then let us go forth to the work
yet to do
With zeal that shall never decline,
Be strong in the Lord, and the
promise believe
That "they that we wise shall
shine."*

An Interpretation

John Alexander Dowie: A Man With A Personality, A Message, And A Vision
by Charles L. Kessler

On June 7, 1888, there passed through the Golden Gate at San Francisco an unknown man who was destined within thirteen years to become a figure of international fame. In that short period of time John Alexander Dowie stirred thousands by his dynamic sermons in the largest halls of Chicago; he inveighed against wickedness in high and low places; he languished in jail scores of times; he established a Church home for all Christians; he imported from England both the men and the machinery of an entire new industry; and he founded a city on the western shores of Lake Michigan.

Born in Edinburgh, Scotland, May 25, 1847, Dr. Dowie was educated in that metropolis. Later he went to Australia, where ultimately he entered an independent ministry. He came to America in interests of the International Divine Healing Association and, after a short time on the Pacific Coast, he made his headquarters in Chicago. It was there that the ministry was

begun (in a "little wooden hut" near the Columbian Exposition of 1893) which was to skyrocket him to a position of international attention.

By 1896 this dynamic evangelist was ready to organize the Christian Catholic Church, and on July 15, 1901, the gates of Zion City were opened to admit the shepherd and his flock, a flock gathered from Australia, Canada, the British Isles, and the far corners of the United States — from around the world.

That 10,000 people from the ends of the earth should gather on a tract of land a half a hundred miles from Chicago with the lofty ideal of building a city for God, may seem to be a strange thing for the twentieth century. Undoubtedly the man himself — with a voice colored by a quaint Scotch accent which rang out with dramatic power in certain, clear tones, restrained enough to force his listeners to complete attentiveness; with twinkling eyes which radiated kind-

ness and yet demanded obedience; and with a flowing white beard which gave a man of fifty the appearance of a patriarch, yea, even in the imagination, a likeness to a prophet of old — undoubtedly such a man was a human magnet.

But more important than the factor of personality, here was a messenger who was preaching the evangel of the primitive Church. Hundreds upon hundreds were raising paeans of praise to God that not only had they been saved from depths of degradation and sin, but also that from beds of pain, from hopeless conditions of disease, from casts which had enchain'd for years, they had been healed and freed through the prayer of faith. For John Alexander Dowie stood almost alone in the world contending for the truth that Satan is the Defiler and Jesus is the Healer. It was only natural then that a remnant of God's people would be thrilled to hear that it was Satan who had bound them in disease and infirmity, and that a merciful Father had sent His Son to die, not only to bear the sins of mankind, but also to make an atonement which would suffice for all of the consequences of sin, an atonement which could in very truth "destroy the works of the Devil."

And so it was not the personality of John Alexander Dowie alone which was responsible for the gathering of a nucleus of people to Northern Illinois in the early years of this century. That radiant personality would have been exerted in vain had it not been for the message which he delivered. The message was one which proclaimed Christ as Savior and Healer, one which pointed the way to the holy, consecrated life. And, it was one which called for action! Girded with the armor of a gallant soldier of the Cross, John Alexander Dowie embarked on a mission of Christian warfare against the hosts of sin, intent upon bringing the good news of freedom to the captives of Hell. Thus it was a militant message that he delivered. As it is with all those who take up the "good fight," Dr. Dowie did not escape the wounds inflicted in the heat of the battle. Physical lessons were not lacking, but greater still were the wounds to the heart caused by persecution and reviling.

But even these things do not

fully explain the magnetism of the ministry of John Alexander Dowie. The personality and message of the man (tempered, of course, by the suffering he was called upon to endure) resulted in a great vision — the ideal of building a city for God, a city "where it would be easy to do right and difficult to do wrong," a city which would be preparatory for the millennial reign of Jesus Christ, a city whose ideals of Christian living, unity, social justice, and the rule of God would reach out and give to the world the truths of the Theocracy. This was the holy vision which made men and women leave home and family and business to flock to a site on the shores of Lake Michigan.

Few men in the thousands of years of the history of the human

race have had a vision as clear and far-reaching as that which was cherished by the founder of the Christian Catholic Church and the City of Zion. Others have dreamed of the perfect commonwealth, among them Plato, More, Bacon, and Harrington — their names are immortal — but the vision of John Alexander Dowie went beyond the utopian schemes espoused by these men, for he had a glimpse of the Theocracy, the righteous rule of Jesus Christ from Mount Zion; yea, and in the ultimate his was the ideal which has inspired the great saints through the ages, for "he looked for a city whose builder and maker was God."

Thus we see that there were moulded together in this man of God three great factors which ex-

plain the course which his ministry took and which made it simpler to understand why men and women were attracted to the City of Zion. The message of primitive Christianity and a vision of millennial glory when proclaimed in dynamic fashion by John Alexander Dowie were irresistible to many who hungered after the bread of life.

These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and confessed that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth.
(Hebrews 11:13).

THE SEVENTY-FIFTH ANNUAL CONVOCATION OF THE CHRISTIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

DOWIE MEMORIAL DRIVE, ZION, ILLINOIS

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28, — SUNDAY, OCTOBER 5, 1975

Morning Services 9:30 — Evenings 7:00

THEME **"BE STRONG AND OF GOOD COURAGE"**

—JOSHUA 1:6

ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING OF THE CHRISTIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH

Saturday Evening, October 4, 6:30

Fellowship Supper — Annual Business Meeting — Annual Session